



## Emerging Directions

### Developing Investment Priorities...

Some local investment priorities include:

- A fund to provide pavement assistance for 178 cities under 5,000
- Funding for small bridge and high cost bridge improvements to keep freight moving on the local system
- Funding for safety improvements
- Reinstating a City County Congestion Corridor Program to assist with multi-jurisdictional corridor needs

Local agencies also recognize the need for new local transportation funding options to meet urgent and growing needs. These may include:

- Regional Investment Options
- Street utility authority
- Other locally implemented options, including a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) charge, weight-based fees, etc...



# LOCAL AGENCIES

The Association of Washington Cities, the Association of Counties, the County Road Administration Board, the Transportation Improvement Board, and others are working closely with WSDOT on the update of Washington's Transportation Plan. In the first phase of the Plan update, the Transportation Commission has been briefed on local agency perspectives regarding the following issues:

- preservation
- safety
- system efficiencies
- moving freight
- transportation access
- health and the environment
- future visions.

## What are we finding so far?

With local transportation funding being squeezed by reductions and expansion needs, local governments face large shortfalls in preserving their pavements and bridges.

Recent local funding reductions include:

- Discontinuation of the Small City Paving Program, which funded 157 cities and paved 160 miles of streets
- Discontinuation of the City/County Corridor Congestion Relief Program
- Transportation Improvement Board revenues are limited - only \$1 is granted for every \$8 requested
- Loss of the Street Utility Fee, \$15 Vehicle Licensing Fee option and lack of dedicated freight mobility funds

Limited transportation resources are not flexible enough. Many urban and urbanizing areas find they are spending preservation funding to meet the capacity needs of new growth while rural areas are spending capacity expansion funding to preserve the system.



*There is a growing recognition that there is a transportation financial crisis at the local level.*

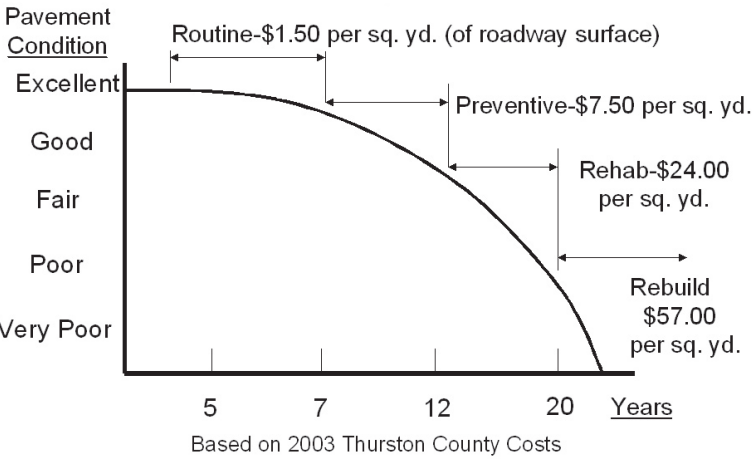
- Secretary of Transportation, Douglas B. MacDonald

Preservation

Cities have started collecting data on 1,800 centerline miles of arterials (as required by RCW 46.68.113) to support their preservation programs. Some of the findings include:

- Of the arterial data reported, 16% falls into the very poor or poor category that would benefit from rehabilitation or reconstruction activities
- The city and county collector networks and arterials are in similar condition and many would benefit from the application of preservation treatments as well.

The conclusion of the data collection effort so far is that aging and deterioration of the local system will require spending more and more to stay in place. As city streets and county roads deteriorate, the cost to repair or replace them doubles every 10 to 15 years.



Maintenance Treatment Cost Comparison

Additionally, there are currently four counties operating their own ferry systems - Pierce, Skagit, Wahkiakum and Whatcom. Although the state does provide some operational subsidy and regular highway-related grant programs can be used for the landing facilities, actual replacement of the ferry vessels was without a grant assistance program until 1991 when CRAB received legislative approval for a capital ferry program. Even with some small amount of assistance, these four counties face shortfalls in funding to replace aging vehicles as well as funding for regular operations and maintenance.



Safety

Despite the lower traffic volume, almost half of all speeding related fatal motor vehicle accidents occur on local and collector roads found in residential and business areas. Rural county roads in Washington have the highest accident rates and are outstanding problems. More than 50 percent of the rural arterials and collectors do not meet current standards. An analysis of county roads shows there are over 1,500 miles of rural arterials (where the trucks to market and businesses operate) that have less than a 24-foot wide surface.

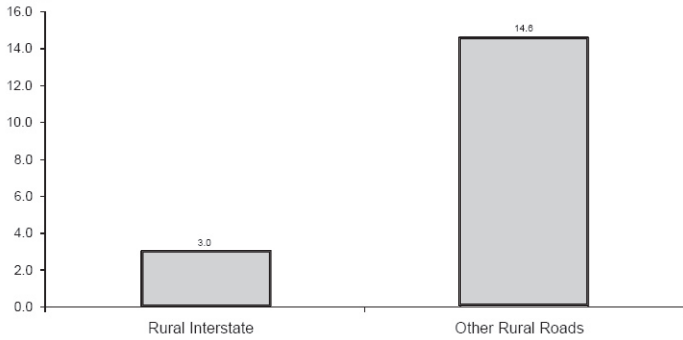
In addition, streets in newly incorporated and annexed cities need major investments to meet urban, safety based design standards that include pedestrian crossings, ADA accommodations, and sidewalks. This is especially true near transit stops and stations.



Rate of Fatalities and Disabling Injuries

By Rural Interstates and Other Rural Roads

Rate Per 100 Million VMT



Efficiencies

Local agencies value network completion as part of a program to make the transportation system more efficient. Grided streets and complete street networks improve overall transportation efficiency in urban and urbanizing areas, particularly when combined with transportation demand management programs.

Freight

Setting aside through freight movements, most freight begins and ends on local roads. Local roads also provide backup to state routes in cases of closure and congestion.

Approximately half of the roads making up the County Freight and Goods System have deficiencies that necessitate weight restrictions and road closures during certain times of the year, making these routes unusable for reliable freight transport. The cost of upgrading these facilities is in the range of \$2 billion.

Larger economic centers need additional improvements for freight mobility, as well as congestion relief and earthquake protection. This will require a level of investment that local resources alone cannot meet.

Transportation Access

By 2020, over 1 million people in Washington will be 65 or older – almost twice the number of people that are in that age group today. Currently, the elderly in Washington represent 12 percent of the population, yet they make up 17 percent of the pedestrian casualties. The growing 65+ population in Washington will increase the demand for demand-response public transportation and require special roadway safety and pedestrian safety emphasis.

Active and Livable Communities

Washington residents are increasingly overweight and automobile dependency is implicated along with diet and other choices. Local agencies seek to create more active and livable communities by creating safe walking and bicycling connections from neighborhoods to schools, commercial districts, and recreation areas.



Building Future Visions

Local agencies envision an increased number of partnerships among state, regional, and cities and counties to improve the transportation system.

The Current Focus

Funding Shortfalls

County road levy and the current share of the gas tax cannot meet current funding needs. Local governments also rely heavily on other locally generated revenues to fund transportation: these revenues must also compete with basic government services. As a result, funding for preservation will continue to decline. Per capita gas tax distribution has decreased by 37 percent over the last decade. The gas tax, while a stable and sizeable funding source, is also facing challenges as the vehicle fleet becomes more fuel efficient.

Flexibility

More flexibility is needed in local gas tax distribution. Cities currently receive 2.46 cents in gas tax distribution, half of which is required to go toward construction.

Available local options cannot generate enough funds to provide for construction, maintenance, and preservation programs.

Lack of multi-modal funding will continue to present a roadblock to addressing issues—other sources besides the gas tax and vehicle fees will need to be considered and tapped.